

Public Workshop for:
Fiscal Year 2013-2018 CAPITAL TRANSPORTATION PROGRAM
SUSSEX COUNTY
September 13, 2012, 4pm – 7pm

WORKSHOP SUMMARY

A public workshop for the Department of Transportation's six-year Capital Transportation Program for 2013-2018 was held in Sussex County on September 13, 2012.

Several comments were made for the public record, and DelDOT offers the following responses:

Comment: Sidewalks and pedestrian crossings are needed on SR 1.

Response: The Department of Transportation recognizes the need to complete the sidewalk system along SR 1 between Five Points and Rehoboth. We also realize the number of safe crossings that need to be increased. We currently have a project included in our program to accomplish this. The design is complete and the right-of-way for the project is currently being acquired. Construction should begin in 2014.

Comment: The intersection of Plantation Road, Cedar Grove Road, and Postal Lane needs to be addressed for safety improvements.

Response: The Department of Transportation recognizes the operational and safety problems at the intersection of Plantation Road, Cedar Grove Road, and Postal Lane. The Department has a project in its program to address these issues and is currently finalizing the design. Right-of-way acquisition is scheduled to begin later this calendar year and construction is currently funded to begin in Fiscal Year 2014.

Comment: What is occurring with the SR 1 and SR 30 Grade Separated Intersection south of MilfoRoad?

Response: The Department of Transportation recognizes the need to build an overpass, or grade separated intersection, at the intersection of SR 1 and SR 30 (Wilkins Road). The Department has a project in its program to accomplish this. A contractor has been selected to construct the project and construction should begin later this fall.

Comment: Several comments were received as to the need for improvements at US 113 at Alms House Road and Kruger Road.

Response: The Department of Transportation recognizes the safety problems at the intersections of U.S. 113 and Alms House Road., Kruger Road., Woods Branch Road., and Speedway Road. The Department does not believe that a traffic signal at these locations is the best possible solution. While a traffic signal may be more convenient for some motorists and may reduce certain types of crashes, the Department believes a traffic signal may actually cause an increase in other types of crashes. Therefore, the Department has recommended channelizing and restricting some of the more problematic movements through the installation of curbing in the median. Right turns will still be able to be made at all locations. Some left turns will still be accommodated. However, motorists will not be able to travel straight across the highway from west to east or from east to west as they do today. The curbing that is proposed to be installed is considered mountable and can easily be driven over by farm equipment when the need arises. In addition, modifications will be made at the intersection of Alms House Road. and Shortly Road to accommodate trucks and farm equipment.

This will allow trucks and farm equipment in the area to use the signalized intersection at the intersection of U.S. 113 and Shortly Road. This effort is currently in the design engineering phase.

Comment: Several intersections along US Route 9 pose safety risks for motorists.

Response: The Department of Transportation recognizes the operational and safety problems associated with numerous intersections along U.S. 9 between Georgetown and Lewes. The Department currently has several projects included in its program to address issues at many of these intersections. The first of these projects will include improvements at Gravel Hill Road. (SR 30), Hudson Road, Fisher Road, Sweetbriar Road, and Dairy Farm Road. The design of this project is complete and the necessary right-of-way for this project is currently being acquired. Construction is scheduled to begin next spring. The next project will make improvements at the intersection of U.S. 9 and SR 5. This project is in the early stages of design. Right-of-way acquisition is scheduled to begin in Fiscal Year 2014 and construction is scheduled to begin in Fiscal Year 2016. Another project will make improvements at the intersection of U.S. 9 and Airport Road and Sand Hill Road. The design for this project is scheduled to begin in Fiscal Year 2015.

Comment: Concerns about SR 24, Love Creek to SR 1 and the need for improvements.

Response: The Department of Transportation recognizes the need to make improvements to SR 24 east of Love Creek. The Department currently has a project in its program to accomplish this. The project will extend the four lane section to a point west of Plantation Road along with additional roadway improvements. In addition, sidewalks will be constructed in several key areas. The design is in the final stages and right-of-way acquisition is expected to begin within the next few months. Construction is expected to begin in Fiscal Year 2014.

Comment: Will DelDOT realign Park Avenue (Truck Route 9) in Georgetown?

Response: The Department of Transportation recognizes the need to make improvements to Park Avenue (Truck Route 9) and we recognize the need to begin the efforts as soon as possible. Design of this project is scheduled to begin later this fall as soon as federal funds for the effort are made available.

Comment: Several comments were received which requested the Department to make improvements to East / West Corridors (SR 404, SR 26, SR 24, SR 5, U.S. 9).

Response: The Department of Transportation recognizes the need to make improvements to the transportation network that moves traffic east and west in Sussex County. During the past several decades, the Department made numerous attempts to establish a four lane highway that runs east / west through Sussex County. All of these efforts resulted in major opposition from the public. Therefore, the Department is not pursuing any of these four lane efforts at this time. However, the Department recognizes that some operational improvements are needed along the existing corridors (U.S. 9, SR 404, SR 24, SR 26, and SR 54). The Department currently has numerous efforts along these corridors included in its program. The operational improvements mentioned in Pennsylvania were needed as motorists in those parts of that state found themselves on long stretches of roadways with few areas to pass. The most significant operational problems on most of Delaware's east/west corridors are at intersections. Many intersections do not have a separate turn lane for traffic which is attempting to turn left. The turning vehicle must stop wait in the main travel lane until an acceptable gap in traffic is found. Traffic backs up behind this turning vehicle until the turning vehicle successfully completes its turn. The projects included in Delaware's program will add turn lanes to the most problematic intersections along with other operational improvements to resolve this issue.

Comment: Safety improvements needed at the intersection of U.S. 9 and Airport Road / Sand Hill Road.

Response: The Department of Transportation recognizes the need to make improvements at the intersection of U.S. 9 and Sand Hill Road. and has included a project in its program to do this. The comment stated the necessary right-of-way for these improvements had already been acquired. Unfortunately, this is not the case. A considerable amount of right-of-way will still need to be acquired upon completion of the design. The design for this project is scheduled to begin in Fiscal Year 2015.

Comment: Improve public transportation in Sussex County and the infrastructure to improve it.

Response: Delaware Transit Corporation continues to work to improve and expand service in Sussex County. They currently have a project in design to build a Lewes Transit Center near Five Points in Lewes. This would improve transit service in Sussex County. Likewise, the SR 1 Expansion Project a few years ago provided a dedicated bus lane for buses to drop off passengers and permit them to have a dedicated through lane.

Comment: High number of crashes on SR 1 between Nassau and Dewey.

Response: DelDOT cannot control driver behavior which is a huge contributing factor to crashes. We can monitor key locations like this corridor to determine if a high crash rate is occurring. When it does, such locations are prioritized as high crash areas. DelDOT oversees specific funding to make improvements to these locations. We will monitor this area to determine if future projects are needed to address crashes.

Comment: No interconnectivity between businesses on SR 1.

Response: DelDOT is aware of the lack of interconnectivity between businesses along SR 1. While it would be ideal to have business cooperate with one another and with DelDOT to make this a reality, it is often very difficult to accomplish. However, DelDOT does suggest this idea to business owners as we agree it would be beneficial to motorists not having to get on SR 1 to get from business to business.

Comment: There is a need for increased lighting on SR 1.

Response: DelDOT has posted lighting at key locations along SR 1 in recent years. Again, we continually balance the safety and cost aspects. We will continue to work with businesses on a case by case basis to determine if lighting is warranted (based on crash data) and economically feasible.

Comment: Too many signs on SR 1; placement of signs causes concern.

Response: DelDOT is required to place signs only in its right-of-way, which varies at different locations along SR 1. This may limit us from moving the signs back further off SR 1. The number of signs is really determined by warrant and need, so any sign must be justified to be there.

Comment: Safety concerns at Cave Neck Road and SR 1.

Response: DelDOT has evaluated this location and continues to monitor it until its crash or other statistic meets warrants for a traffic signal or other improvement.